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GUIDE TO HOLINESS.

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For the Guide to Holiness.

WILLBUR FISK, D. D.

"He was a burning and a shining light." Among the galaxy of brilliant ones in the firmament of the Christian church, Fisk was a star of the first magnitude; a star that radiated light, abundant and pleasant to the eye, and its burning was most refreshing to the soul.

The public life of Dr. Fisk has been so long held in the sweetest remembrance by the great mass of our readers, that it would not seem best to dwell upon it. What made him such a man, we may, however, well consider.

In the cause of education, he was among the foremost. He was president of the Wesleyan University when he put off his armor. Such was his reputation that he had been elected to the presidency of different colleges with the offer of bountiful salaries. He also held other offices for the promotion of education, both honorable to himself and useful to community. And his offices were not with him posts of honor, but of hardship and sacrifice. He never sustained the character of the hireling, but of the true shepherd. As a minister of the gospel, whether on a station, a presiding elder, or as an occasional preacher, he was universally admired and eminently successful. That he was generally esteemed wise and prudent, is evident from the consideration that he was twice elected to the office of a bishop.

But why was his reputation so high? What was the great secret of his success? He was a man of much native talent; he had a liberal education. These undoubtedly laid the foundation of his usefulness. But they did not enable him to accomplish the work which he wrought. He walked with God, and God was with him.

We come now to the main work, which we designed in this brief notice—some account of his Christian experience—for which we shall be indebted to the “Life of Fisk,” by Dr. Holdich; a book, by the way, which our readers might well consider a treasure. Passing over a volume replete with interest, we shall fill a space suitable for our work, with extracts pertaining to his conversion, sanctification, and last days; giving such passages as will manifest his ardent love to God, his tenderness for personal friends, and his intense interest especially for the intellectual and spiritual welfare of the world.

Willbur Fisk had pious parents, whose prayers were answered in his conversion when he was about eleven years of age. He soon became a bright example of youthful piety.

He began early to pray in public, and to speak in class-meetings and at love-feasts, and even to exhort after preaching, which was then generally in a schoolhouse or private dwelling. On these occasions the relation of his Christian feelings was often peculiarly affecting. His zeal, talents, and aptitude in speaking were such as deeply to impress the minds of all with an expectation of subsequent eminence.

But in after years, while pursuing his collegiate course, his piety declined, and his mind was bent on the legal profession. His Master had designed him for another profession, and so had his pious mother. In after years she remarked that while Willbur was aiming at becoming a distinguished statesman, “I was all the time praying that he might be made a minister.” While engaged in the study of law his mind was much exercised as to his spiritual state and in reference to the holy ministry. After having been engaged for a season as a private tutor, in Maryland, he left for his home in Vermont. On his way he was attacked by a violent hemorrhage, and was led to thorough searchings of heart by the interrogations of an unconverted man who felt an interest in the sick stranger. After recovering so far as to be able to travel, he was taken home to Lyndon, where a new scene of things awaited him.

“The place was at that period favored, under the ministry of the Rev. Phineas Peck, of the Methodist Church, with a remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, were subjects of the work. Several of Mr. Fisk’s per-



sonal friends were among the number ; among others, the late Hon. Benjamin F. Deming, and Mr., now the Rev. C. D. Cahoon. The influence that pervaded the community was exceedingly powerful, so that, as was supposed, one fifth of the inhabitants professed justifying faith in Christ. Mr. Fisk had not been long at home before his mind was deeply affected, and all the associations of his early days returned with greatly augmented power. His distress of mind at first was very deep. 'Never,' says the Rev. Mr. Cahoon, 'shall I forget his sorrowful countenance, and the tears he shed while seeking restoration to the favor of Him whose Spirit he had so long grieved. No, never ; for the impression is as vivid in my mind almost as it was when I saw the tears flowing down his emaciated cheeks.' "

"In this state of mind, though unknown to many, he continued several days. One Sabbath evening he remained, after public service, at a conference-meeting. It was a time of great interest. After many had risen to speak, to the surprise of all, arose young Mr. Fisk. He commenced in a tremulous voice. He confessed his dereliction from early principles and purposes, and avowed his determination to return to Him 'from whom he had deeply revolted,' and finally announced his belief that God for Christ's sake had blotted out his sins, and again received him into favor. The effect was electric. All felt an interest in him ; and to see him, a young gentleman of interesting appearance, engaging manners, finished education, blighted hopes, in delicate health, now professing anew the feelings to which he had long been a stranger, was highly exciting. He spoke himself with intense emotion. Tears and sobs choked his utterance ; but every broken sentence vibrated upon the chords of some sympathizing bosom. A sensation pervaded the assembly that scarcely left a dry eye in the house. Tears, sobs, and exclamations of thankful joy were heard in every direction. He was now filled anew 'with peace and joy in believing ;' for he had heard the voice that had cried to him in various painful dispensations, 'Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings ;' and he had said, 'Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.' And now the Lord healed his backslidings, and loved him freely.

"As soon as Mr. Fisk had entered into the 'liberty of the sons of God,' he began to exert himself for the good of others. He spent as much of his time as his strength would permit in attending religious meetings and visiting the awakened, and on every side the inquiry was heard, 'What shall I do to be saved ?' "

Soon after this we find him struggling under a sense of duty to preach the gospel. We know something of his struggles and the result, by a paper containing his reflections, thrown into the form of a dialogue between himself and his Divine Master, in which his objections to the step are stated and answered. This dialogue he once rehearsed, in the year 1838, as though it related to another person, at a meeting which he attended, of, I believe, the Preacher's Aid Society in the City of Baltimore:

## DIALOGUE.

"*Christ.* Go preach my Gospel.

"*Answer.* But, Lord, I have other engagements.

"*C.* You are not your own; you are bought with a price.

"*A.* But, Lord, I have been preparing myself for another profession. I have been struggling for an education. I have high prospects before me, &c.

"*C.* What have you that you have not received?

"*A.* Lord, I have strong domestic feelings, and I hope one day to have a family and home of my own.

"*C.* He that loveth houses or lands, wife or children more than me, is not worthy of me.

"*A.* Lord, I have aged parents, and I am an only son. Filial love and duty require that I should look after them.

"*C.* He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

"*A.* Lord, is there no excuse? May not another answer?

"*C.* The gifts and callings of God are without repentance.

"*A.* At least, let me first stop and bury my father and mother.

"*C.* Let the dead bury their dead.

"*A.* At any rate, I must wait a while, and acquire some property, &c.

"*C.* He that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of Heaven.

"*A.* Lord, I cannot go.

"*C.* Wo unto you if you preach not the Gospel.

"*A.* But, Lord, wilt thou not pity a poor helpless wretch, who begs for an excuse as one would plead for his life?

"*C.* 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich.'

"Here" (as he related the circumstance in Baltimore) "the dia-



logue ended. The young man covered his face with his hands, and bursting into tears, cried,

“Nay, but I yield, I yield.”

“The bond was signed and sealed, and the youth was consigned over, soul and body, to the Church. The next thing I saw of him, he was threading a pathless forest among the Green Mountains, bordering upon the Canada line, driving his horse before him because of the roughness of the wilderness, cheerful as an angel on an errand of mercy. And I heard his song, with which he made the ragged mountain tops that hung over his path reverberate; and what, sir, do you think it was?

“No foot of land do I possess,  
Nor cottage in this wilderness,  
A poor wayfaring man:  
I lodge a while in tents below,  
Or gladly wander to and fro,  
Till I my Canaan gain.

“Nothing on earth I call my own,  
A stranger to the world unknown,  
I all their goods despise;  
I trample on their whole delight,  
And seek a city out of sight,  
A city in the skies.”

He ranged among the mountains for a short season, and then joined the New England Conference, and was stationed in Charlestown, Mass.

While on this station Mr. Fisk attended a camp-meeting at Wellfleet, on Cape Cod. This meeting was signalized by remarkable displays of Divine power in the awakening of sinners and sanctification of believers. The subject of our narrative had many exercises of mind on the subject of Christian perfection, but was not, when he went to the meeting, under any special concern about it. But while there his attention was strongly interested in it, especially under a sermon by the Rev. Timothy Merritt, on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. “He became deeply sensible of his want of full conformity to the Christian standard: he sought earnestly unto God through the blood of the atoning sacrifice; and in the course of the meeting he obtained that “perfect love” that “casteth out fear.” His religious emotions now acquired a wonderful intensity and elevation. One who was present at the time says, “His language and whole appearance had something in it more than human,

most manifestly indicating that his soul then glowed with ardors of love nearly allied to those of angels. The next morning he preached on growth in grace, when the impression made upon the audience was deep, awful, glorious. His beautiful classic style, vivified with fire from Heaven's own altar, never appeared to better advantage. He poured forth a full soul in 'thoughts that breathe and words that burn.'

Some effects of his late exercises of mind are not unworthy of notice. His views of the Divine Being, and especially of the power, glory, and fulness of Christ, were almost overwhelming. He felt such a horror of sin, and had so great an apprehension of the purity of the Divine law, that he 'almost,' to use his own strong language, 'feared to set his foot on the ground lest he should do wrong.' Familiarity with these views would necessarily abate somewhat the intensity of his feelings. But other effects became permanent. Previously to this he had often doubted, not only his interest in Christ, but the truth of the Christian religion; afterward, never. From this time he has been heard to say that he never laid his head upon his pillow without feeling that, if he never waked in this world, all would be well. Prior to this he was often subject to desponding, gloomy seasons; we heard him say long afterward that he knew no gloomy hours; his mind was always serene and happy. This may have been owing, in part, to that admirable balance of mind which characterized him, and on which our mental enjoyment so greatly depends; but it was matured and confirmed by that equal balance of the moral faculties which the efficient spirit of Christianity produced.

Writing to his sister some time after, he says, 'I have found, my dear sister, much consolation of late in that religion which I profess. God has been pleased to brighten my evidence of acceptance with him. I have been enabled to say, 'I have not a doubt; I feel it so.' I have dedicated myself anew to the Lord and to his ministry. Though I love you, my sister, and my dear parents, if possible, better than ever, yet I have felt such a complete devotedness to the work in which I am engaged, that those ties which have hitherto given me pain are loosed. Most willingly do I devote all to God, and rejoice in the service of such a Master. I look back upon my past life, upon my follies and my wanderings, and wonder at the mercy that has spared me, and at that Providence that has protected me. O that I could love this Saviour more and serve him better!'

To the Rev. Phineas Peck he says, in a letter about the same date, 'O! my brother, I could write pages on this subject; but I must forbear. I thank God that I ever saw this day. I love our Church better



than ever. How glad am I that I never left it, and how thankful that they never cast me off when backslidden from the cause! How grateful am I to you for all your fatherly concern and care for my soul. I pray God to reward you in heaven. I want to see you more than ever, and all my Christian friends in Vermont. O, encourage them to go on. Let *holiness of heart* be the motto. My dear brother, will you preach it—in the desk, in the class, and from house to house?"

This deep work of grace he never lost. On the other hand his path shone more and more unto the perfect day. An heavenly unction seemed upon him in all that he did. But, as we must of necessity be brief, as before intimated, we shall pass unnoticed his distinguished labors, and wonder at the grace which supported him in the great emergency.

\* On the last night of the year 1838, Dr. Fisk attended the Watch-night in the Methodist Church in Middletown, and preached the first sermon. His text was taken from the address of the patriarch Jacob to Pharaoh: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage." It was touching to see him upon his elevated seat, for he was obliged to preach in a sitting posture, discoursing of life, death, immortality. Many of his thoughts and illustrations were striking and beautiful. He compared man, in the current of life, to a vessel in a whirlpool, borne round and round by the eddying current, offering feeble resistance, until it reached the vortex and disappeared. There was a remarkable appropriateness in the subject, which would have made it still more effecting had the event which soon followed been foreseen.

His health declined rapidly, so that on the 8th of the ensuing February, a medical consultation was held upon his case. The decision was unfavorable to any prospect of his recovery or of his long continuance. On learning the result, Professor Johnston, who was with him soon after, says "that it surprised him, yet he was perfectly calm, and began to arrange his affairs as though he was preparing for a pleasant journey." Then, after making some disposition of his papers with Professor Smith, his executor, he was assisted to his chair, in order to rest from the fatigue which his exertions had occasioned. Soon after being seated, he remarked in a whisper, for he was too weak to converse aloud, "What are all these things compared with the welfare of an immortal soul!" On being asked how the prospect of death now appeared to him, he immediately replied, "Death has no terrors to me; but I have not that open vision of Heaven I could desire.

\* The account of his last sickness we copy nearly entire from his memoir.

Pray for me, that the prospect before me may brighten. I feel that my life has been a series of imperfections, and there is nothing that I can rest my hopes upon but the merits of Christ." Soon after, he added, "There are a few things I would like to see done before I am taken from this world; but what am I, that I should have a hand in those things?" and, after another pause, he proceeded, "There is the poor University; but I hope you (meaning the professors) will stand by it, and that God will bless it."

The scene, or, rather, succession of scenes which took place after this in his dying chamber, were in the highest degree instructive and elevating. It was almost an uninterrupted exhibition of moral sublimity. Many received lessons of wisdom and piety there which they will never forget. To these a gentleman alluded who was in Paris in 1841, at the re-interment of the bones of Napoleon, who, after describing that gorgeous but heartless pageantry, observes, "As I looked upon the coffin, I could not feel veneration for Napoleon; the halo of true glory shone not around it. The chamber where I saw that good man, the late Dr. Willbur Fisk, calmly and triumphantly meeting his fate, was to me a scene of infinitely higher and more enviable glory." We may be allowed, under such circumstances, to enter somewhat fully into the particulars.

To conceive properly of the situation of our sufferer, it ought to be understood, that such was his difficulty of breathing, that he was obliged to keep his chest as nearly as possible in an erect posture. Though it was winter, but little fire could be kept in the room; the door was always partly open, and then he required almost constant fanning to aid his respiration. As he could not lay down more than one hour in twenty-four, the pain and weariness he endured were indescribable. Though his breathing was at all times laborious, he had frequent paroxysms of extreme violence, during which it appeared as though each breath would be his last. At these seasons he could only gasp out a word or a syllable at a time. Much of what we shall record was uttered in that manner.

The reader will be struck with several peculiarities in these observations. He will see at every turn our subject's distinctive characteristics, his prevailing sentiments, feelings, and interests. He will not only observe the hallowing influence and out-beaming radiance of his piety, but his peculiar humility, calmness, patience, consideration. Nothing seemed to be forgotten by him in which he had before felt a concern; especially the interests of religion, education, his family and friends, were all very nigh his heart, and were thought of and cared



for in the midst of his deepest agonies. It was a frequent expression of those around him, "Dr. Fisk is himself to the very last!" Surely those who have had the privilege of being in

"The chamber where the good man *met* his fate,"

will never lose the salutary lessons there imbibed.

And, first, of his *lowly views of himself and of his own labors*, we have clear and strong testimony. Thus at one time he said,

"When I look back, I wonder at the little I have done. And what is rest to me" (he had just been speaking of rest in Heaven), "that I should indulge anticipations of it, while there are so many unconverted in the world, going down to eternal wo? I see much to be done; but any active mind can do it: and the work of God is in his own hands. He can do without me. What am I, or my father's house, that God should have honored me to share in the ministry of the Gospel? I bless Him that He has made me the humble instrument of doing any thing—the least thing—for Him. It is all of grace. Boasting is excluded. The glory is all his, the shame all mine. I want a score of years more to do any thing like what a man ought to do in the course of his life."

And again: "O, how little have I done! O, the many deficiencies! I feel constrained to ask forgiveness of the Church and of the world." \* \* "I shall be a star of small magnitude, but it is a wonder that I shall get to Heaven at all. It is because love works miracles that such a feeble, sinful worm may be saved by grace. O, the mercy of God, to put such comeliness on such a worm as I! I am an unprofitable servant. How little have I done of what I might have done!"

When one remarked to him that he "knew of no one in whose life there were fewer things to regret," he replied, "I do not feel so at all. I feel full of imperfections and frailties."

Thus, "having no confidence in the flesh," *all his hope of salvation rested on the atonement of the Lamb*. "What a blessed state to be in," he observed, "to be any thing God pleases. The will of God appears unspeakably beautiful to me; but, alas! I fail of fulfilling it in a great many ways. But, for all this, I have thrown myself on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. O, yes! I feel that my soul is centred in the love of God in Christ Jesus." Thus, again, "If I have been instrumental in a little good, I thank God for it. I am an unprofitable servant. All my hope is in Christ." At another time, apparently at the close of some train of silent thought, he said, "Rights? I have no

rights, but my Saviour has rights ; and he bestows them on me. It is all of grace."

Once only did he experience any peculiar *temptation or mental conflict*. In the early part of his illness, he remarked that "the enemy was thrusting sore" at him, and immediately said to the Rev. Horace Bartlett, "If you have any faith, pray." When the prayer was closed, he expressed his deliverance from the gathering cloud, and from that time nothing seemed to obstruct his view of his Saviour and the better world.

His *faith in the truths of Christianity* never wavered. When asked if he still believed the doctrines which he had preached to others, he replied, with emphasis, "Yes ; they are God's truths, and will bear the light of eternity."

He always entertained *lofty views of the nature and holy privileges of the Christian ministry*. Thus, when the Rev. Messrs. Granger and Tyler, of the Congregational Church, called to see him, "he immediately," says the former, "began to converse about the solemn responsibilities of the ministry," observing, "I hope you will give the trumpet a more certain sound than I have ever done." On Mr. G.'s saying to him, "Our 'Lord had need of him' in the higher employments of Heaven," he replied, "It may be : I have often thought, too, that the occupation in Heaven would be to do God's will and promote his glory. When I surrendered myself to the cause of God, it was a full surrender to do his will, any where and any how, as he would please ; and perhaps I may be employed in some way to advance the cause of redemption on earth."

To the Rev. Mr. Cookson, of the Baptist Church, he said, "I am leaving the walls, but I leave you on them. God bless you, and make you more faithful in sounding the Gospel trumpet than I have been. O, the responsibilities of a minister ! O, may not the blood of souls be found in our skirts !"

Mr. Cookson inquired if he felt the expression of the venerable Wesley, "The best of all is, God is with us." "O yes," he replied, "nature indeed is yielding, but God remains."

He was always remarkably fond of singing, and often requested that some of *his favorite hymns* might be sung. Among these was the one in the Methodist Collection, commencing,

"Jesus, the name high over all ;"

of the last stanzas of which,

"Happy if with my latest breath  
I may but gasp his name,



Preach him to all, and cry in death,  
Behold, behold the Lamb ! ”

he was particularly fond, requesting that it might be sung more than once. And when, at his request, Dr. Watts's hymn was sung, commencing,

“Lord, in thy temple we appear,”

he repeated the last stanzas distinctly in a whisper, thus :

“Jesus, the vision of thy face  
Hath overpowering charms ;  
Scarce shall I feel Death's cold embrace,  
If thou be in my arms.

And while you hear my heartstrings break,  
How sweet my moments roll ;  
A mortal paleness on my cheek,  
But glory in my soul.”

Sunday, the 10th of February, was a day of uncommon interest and solemnity. There was not the least prospect of his recovery, so that it was not thought necessary to restrain him from conversing ; and yet his strength was not so far exhausted as to prevent the free play of his mind and feelings. The scene in his chamber was transcendently elevating. In the morning he asked Mrs. Fisk what day it was. On ascertaining, he observed, “This would be a good day to die.” “Perhaps,” said Mrs. Fisk, “the Lord will take you to his rest this day.” “Then I can worship,” was his answer, “with the Sabbath-keeping band in Heaven ; but I cannot here.” On being told that he always loved the Sabbath, “Yes,” he replied ; “and though it was a day of toil to me, yet I loved my work. To me the Sabbath has been an emblem of that promised rest. O, that rest is sweet ! It is glorious ! ”

He then beckoned Martha to him, saying, “Let us pray together ; ” and, throwing an arm round each of them as they knelt before him, he offered up a prayer, gasping it out word by word, which seemed the very language of the spiritual world. It was deep, pathetic, powerful, sublime. Then, as they arose from their knees, he said, “Vain human reasoners often tell us that the soul and the body will go down together to the dust, because the spirit is depressed when the body is ; but it is not true. These clogs of earth have often retarded the operations of my mind, and been as so many barriers to its activity. But I now feel a strength of soul and an energy of mind which this body, though afflicted and pained, cannot impair.

"The soul has an energy of its own; and so far from my body pressing my soul down to the dust, I feel as if my soul had almost power to raise the body upward and bear it away; and it will at last, by the power of God, effectually draw it to Heaven, for its attractions are thitherward." Then, turning to Mrs. Fisk, he said, "Think not, when you see this poor feeble body stretched in death, that that is your husband. O no! your husband will have escaped free and liberated from every clog! He will have new-plumed his glad wings, and soared away through the ethereal regions to that celestial city of light and love! What! talk of burying your husband! No, never. Your husband cannot be buried! he will be in Heaven. His body may be; and let it go, and mingle with its mother earth: why should you lament? And yet I love this body, notwithstanding it has so often been a hinderance to the aspirations of my mind; for it has been an old companion of mine. It has cost me much care and pain, its tendency being continually to decay; and though it may lie long in the grave, it shall be raised, and I shall see it again; for I hope to be united with it, but with none of its infirmities, with none of its moral deformities. Yes, every particle of this dust shall be raised and changed, in the twinkling of an eye, on the morning of the resurrection. Then it will be freed from all its infirmities. It will have no lame limbs, no weak lungs. It will be refined from all its gross particles. It will be buoyant and ethereal, glorious and immortal! It will be perfect, for it will be fashioned like unto Christ's most glorious body, and united with the soul forever!"

The above sublime sentiments were uttered with the greatest difficulty, when almost every moment it appeared as though the power of respiration must cease.

His last communications with HIS FAMILY were in keeping with his character. Perceiving Mrs. Fisk's overwhelming grief, on ascertaining the decision of the physicians in his case, "My dear wife," he said, "I have always loved you; I have loved to love you; and you were never dearer to me than at this moment. But do not distress my dying moments with your grief. This ought not so to be. I have a great work to do: you must help me by your prayers. I have always thought I should outlive you, and have always prayed that this cup might never be yours; that it might be reserved for me; for I know how unable you are to bear it. But God seems determining otherwise. Bear it? You cannot bear it! But God will help you; for he has promised to be the widow's God and husband, and he will not fail!" At this time also, beckoning Mrs. Fisk's mother and Martha to him, he offered up, as they knelt around him, a prayer most touching and beautiful. A com-



petent judge who was present remarked that, if Dr. Fisk had been in his study, in his most favored moments, he could scarcely have written one more appropriate and eloquent.

At a later period of his illness, on Mrs. Fisk expressing her grief, he said, "I fear you do not give me up. O, give me up to God. Our tie will not be sundered; it will only be strengthened by a purer hope. God will be your husband: rely on him in simple faith, and all shall be well."

At another time he said, "Our parting will not be long. Time seems to me like a mere point. Eternity swallows up all." \* \* \* "Imagination's utmost stretch cannot measure eternity. Oh, my dear, build your hopes on nothing but Jesus, and him crucified! The doctrines of the cross only have efficacy to raise you to Heaven, where I trust we shall soon meet. Oh, then shall we be in possession of those beauties which charm the angels, and bind them to the throne of God."

The *Wesleyan University* lay very near the heart of Dr. Fisk throughout his sickness. We have already had some evidence of this. Afterward, when one spoke to him of the loss it would sustain in his death, he said, "I think it is of God, and if so, He will no doubt take care of it. If it is not, certainly I have been connected with it long enough. It has always been my aim, and so far as I know the feelings of the Faculty, it has been the aim of us all, to send young men into the world to make it better."

Again, when one spoke to him of the difficulty of filling his place in the Faculty, he observed, "It will be easy to find another president, but not so easy to find another father."

Then, having requested *the professors* who were present to come round him, he expressed his fear and regret that the Church generally was not sufficiently alive to the interests of the University; when he observed to them, "On you, therefore, will devolve a double duty. Oh, be faithful! Hitherto you have been faithful." Then to Professor Smith he said, "I thank you for the interest you have ever manifested in relieving my burden. You and Professor Huber have been associated with me the longest; you have, therefore, shared with me the deepest in the cares, the interests, and the poverty of the University. But you will not lose your reward. I would express my love and gratitude to you all for your kindness to me. It gives me great pleasure to reflect how pleasantly we have always lived together, not only in college, but in our little family circle. We have shared each other's joys and each other's sorrows." He then commended his afflicted wife to their care and sympathy, observing, "I believe she has added years to my life by

her constant care and nursing. You will love her for my sake when I am gone." The lady of one of the professors assured him they had done so, and should do so still.

At another time, speaking of the professors, he observed, "We all loved each other, and lived together in such harmony;" when the lady of one of them replied, "Yes, doctor, but you were the magnet that drew us all together.—We all loved you." "Yes," was his characteristic answer, "but not because I was worthy."

Speaking of the University and the professors leads us naturally to speak of *the students*. We have had sufficient proof, in the course of this memoir, of the reciprocal affection existing between them and their president. Deep was the sorrow which filled their hearts on learning his present condition; with earnestness they desired a parting interview with their revered instructor and guardian. He desired that they might all be admitted. On seeing them at the door of his chamber, he beckoned them to approach, and, as they came one by one, he gave each his feeble hand, and bade them on affectionate farewell, adapting his advice or admonition to each with admirable discernment and propriety. It was remarkable that, though not less than a hundred—it was just the commencement of the term, and many of the students had not yet arrived—received his dying counsel, yet to no two did he speak alike. The impression on the minds of the students was very deep. One of them, in a letter to another, who was absent says, "O! what a scene was this! I may forget the name of my father, and know not the mother who bore me, as soon as will the memory of that day pass from me."

It will not be supposed that he overlooked or neglected *his parents* in his final remembrances. At an early period of his illness he remarked, "My dear aged parents, how will they bear the stroke? God will strengthen them for all his will." Then looking at Mrs. F., he said, "Write to them, as soon as you can, all the particulars of my sickness. Give my best love to them. Tell them I have always hoped to be permitted to close their eyes, and that they would be spared the pain of weeping over me. But it is the will of God, and it is all right. Wherein I have failed in duty, I believe they will put it down to poor human nature. Give my best love to all of them. Tell them (the whole family) I believe I shall meet them all in Heaven, and in that I greatly rejoice; and that I die at peace with God and all mankind."

The reader has had ample proof of his *love of labor*, and the following remarks show how he looked upon this subject now. Hearing Mrs. Fisk say something about his life being sacrificed, he looked up



and said, "Sacrifice—sacrifice—what did you say?" and, on being asked if he did not know what his physicians said of his case, he replied, "Yes; they say my nervous system is prostrated; and that, to be sure, looks like it. But it is too late now." A few minutes after, having been placed in his chair, he said, "I do not know but my friends will think I have done wrong in exerting myself so much—and I do not know but I have; but I have not intended it. It is, however, much more pleasant to me *now* to look back, and feel that I have endeavored to exert myself to the utmost of my strength—for you know I could do but little at best—than it would be to look back on a life of idleness. We were not placed here to be idle; no, nor shall we be idle in Heaven. I feel, indeed, as if I should hardly want to go there if I thought I should be idle. If the Lord take me away, he has something for me to do; for he never gave me such an energy of soul as I now feel that I have, without designing to employ it."

Dr. Fisk was born August 31, 1792; February 22, 1839, Jesus took him.

For the Guide to Holiness.

## THOUGHTS ON HOLY LIVING.

### NO. 4.

On the law of Providence in its relation to simplicity of spirit.

SIMPLICITY OF SPIRIT is not multiplied by worldly motives, such as pride, pleasure, anger, honor, riches, and the like; but is a state of mind, *simplified*, in being prompted in its views and actions by the *single motive of God's will*. Being ONE, having its thought, its feeling, and its action subjected to the domination of a single principle, it cannot be multiplied. Like the law of gravitation in the natural world, it is one and undivided in itself, and always tends to one and the same centre.

2. Such simplicity is aided, in being carried into action, by the Providential law. The *multiplied* man is full of worldly schemes. The *simple* man, being in harmony with God's will, finds the rule, (that is to say, the *formal* or *constituting* rule,) of his actions in God's Providences. And the consequence is, that he ceases from all these anxious forecastings and calculations, which result from a worldly spirit. As he receives what God *now gives*, and does not wish to receive anything else; so he does what God *now requires him to do*, without wishing to

do otherwise. Every day, made up of its various incidents and events, constitutes a map, on which Providence has drawn the path which he is to pursue. As each coming hour unrolls this map before his eye of faith, and before his heart of love, he promptly takes his position, step by step, without knowing at each moment where he shall be, and what he shall do in the next moment.

3. It is obvious, therefore, that it is not possible for him to lay down future plans, or to make any such calculations, to be carried into effect at a future time, as have a fixed and absolute character. So far as he exercises what may be termed a prudent foresight, and forms plans of future action, it is always done in subjection to the developments of Providence.

The worldly man says, I will do this, and I will do that; I will go to Nineveh, to Jerusalem, to Rome, to London, and bring many things to pass. But the man who is possessed of a holy simplicity of spirit, true to the inscrutable law of Providence, is like *a little child*. Without excluding a prudential foresight, which is always conditional in its applications, he says, I will go to the designated place, *if the Lord wills*; or I will do this or that, *if the Lord wills*. And it cannot be doubted, if this condition of action is not always expressed, it is at least *always implied*.

4. Whatever general plans he forms, (and it ought to be added in passing, that he is always deliberate and cautious in making such plans,) they are all subordinate to the suggestions and orders of the great Providential Power. He may be said, therefore, to be a man *moved as he is moved upon*;—not a man without motion, but whose motion or action evolves itself in connection with a higher motion. His action, spontaneous and morally responsible, is nevertheless, consentingly and harmoniously regulated by a higher arrangement, antecedently made. Providence is not a thing accidental, but eternal. The events which are involved in it, are letters, which describe the Everlasting Will. The holy man's will, therefore, operating by its own law of action, moves in the superintendence and harmony of a higher, juster, and unchangeable will.

5. To him the world, in all its movements, is full of God. It is a great ocean, never at rest, flowing in different directions, though always at unity with itself. And as each drop of the natural ocean, without ceasing to be a drop, flows on as a part of and in harmony with the great billows, so is he, freely leaving his will to the impulse of a higher will, moved on in harmony with the great sea of Providence.

6. Such an union with Providence not only requires simplicity of



spirit ; but it may be said to *make* a man simple. He thinks, as some ancient writer expresses it, "without thinking ;" that is to say, his thoughts, taken out of the order of his once selfish nature, are suggested by and fall in with the Providential order ; and they do it so easily and so beautifully, like the thoughts of angel natures, that another power seems to think in them and to give them life.

He feels, as the same writer expresses it, "without feeling. That is to say, he feels without making a special effort to feel, and without having his thoughts particularly directed to his feelings." They arise spontaneously in connection with acts and events ;—and in a soul that is in perfect harmony with God, they cannot be otherwise than they are, because God is in them. And so true is this, that God seems to take his place, and to feel for him.

He wills "without willing." That is to say, his will, freed from selfish impulses and from the power of antecedent habits, operates so harmoniously with the Universal Will, that the two wills, not physically, but morally, *are made one*. And he wills as if another willed in his stead.

7. And is not a man, who thus thinks without thinking, feels without feeling, and wills without willing, a very *simple* man ? The truly sanctified man is a child. And who is more a child than the man we have just described ? The child thinks as his father thinks, feels as his father feels, wills as his father wills. And it is this, much more than his physical likeness, which makes him the *true* child. He is sometimes taunted with that which constitutes his *true* honor, namely, that he dares not think for himself, nor feel, nor will for himself, but that *he is just as his father is*. The child of God, also, is just as his Father is. It is this, more than anything else, which makes him the *true* child. And as the Father makes Providence, the child harmonizes with Providence ; and it is much the same thing to say, that he is the child of Providence, and to say that he is the child of God. In either case he is a child, and a child is *SIMPLE* ; that is to say, he has that simplicity of spirit, which makes him think, feel, and will, as another thinks, feels, and wills. In his simplicity, not knowing which way to direct his steps, he goes as he is led. From the hand of Providence he receives his daily food. The same Providence which leads him, feeds him. Being simple, he looks for guidance. All things and all events, are his teachers, because God is in them. He *BELIEVES*, and God takes care of him.

A. K.

For the Guide to Holiness.

## CONCERNING CHRISTIAN CHARACTER—PERSONAL INFLUENCE—THE GUIDE.

DEAR BROTHER KING:—There is a Christian residing in the East, a female, whose piety has stood the tests of more than forty years, and having acquired corresponding purity and strength, now exhibits to all within her sphere of influence, an encouraging and instructive illustration of the grace and faithfulness of God. Having been acquainted with her during more than half her heavenward pilgrimage, I have repeatedly marked her patience, her resignation, her praying spirit, her calm, but fervent zeal, her meekness, her tenderness and love, her stability, her unity of character. Her husband, who is now, I believe, with Abraham, once bore a touching testimony to her purity and consistency, after the following manner—"I have known B." said he, "for a long time, upwards of thirty years, and have not in all that time, found the slightest cause to doubt the reality and depth of her religion." [Meaning, doubtless, to convey the ideas that divine grace had found a welcome seat in her heart, and had uniformly exerted its legitimate influence there.] In a letter to the writer, dated August 29th, the devoted woman who is the subject of these remarks, uses the following language—"Live in the spirit of sacrifice, by divine aid brave all difficulties, and by a humble, holy walk, and godly conversation, show to all around the power of grace and the benefits and sweets of religion. Glory to our compassionate Savior, 'who ever liveth to make intercession for us.' I have had most delightful views of his goodness, his love, his tender compassion, his willingness to meet all cases where the sincere heart looks to him. I have been much comforted when bearing you to the throne of grace, praying that the Lord would direct you, teach you the way you should go, and guide you with his eye."

Facts and reflections might be multiplied to a great extent, in reference to the Christian personage under consideration, but it is not, perhaps, advisable at present. Suffice it to say, her light shines with effect, so far as its rays extend, and this feeble effort to give them wider scope by means of the press, it is hoped may not be in vain. But however circumscribed the influence of this humble disciple of the Lord Jesus may appear to be, let us for our own profit, spend a moment in endeavoring to ascertain its extent.

1st. She has children who have been trained in view of eternity, and



who are all, I believe, professing Christians. Now the depth of the impressions which have been made by her life upon their hearts and minds, cannot of course, be known in time. Then glancing a little farther, see her children's children, trained in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And looking onward farther still, down the vista of time, behold increasing thousands of her offspring, to the third and fourth and tenth and twentieth generation, spreading the salutary influence of her holy life over the world, and multiplying still, the power, by which she, being dead, shall yet speak! And then consider their *collateral* influences also going forth in every direction, all the way down the stream of time. Her own collateral influence, too, should be noticed, circling away through the society in which she has moved for forty years, to the end of the world. But I ask, will her influence stop there? Will she only stamp on the generations of future time, the blessed effects of holy living and godly conversation? Ah, no! Far, far beyond the stars, in the immeasurable depths of eternity, shall be found myriads of redeemed spirits, saved by the infinite mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, and crowning him Lord of all, who will acknowledge her as the instrument of their salvation, "not by human eloquence, and not by the display of worldly pomp, but by the simplicity of holy living and by the word of power uttered in faith." Oh! who can trace the history of individual influence? Its effects upon the world—its agency in forming characters and fixing destiny? Oh! let the Christian world ponder the illimitable meaning of the word INFLUENCE. All that the world honors is destined to speedy decay, but "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

In conclusion, brother King, this excellent female friend has caused the "Guide to Holiness" to be sent regularly to me, during the present year; and in order to convey some idea of my estimate of this publication, let me ask, Does the traveller in a strange land, who has lost his way among rugged mountains, prize the aid of one, who can direct his footsteps safely among precipices and pitfalls, over cliffs and ravines, to a plain and pleasant road that shall lead him to his desired destination?

Does the child who has lost his parent in the midst of a great city, regard with gratitude, some kind hand extended to lead him through its labyrinths and among its crowds, back to the object of his love?

Does the mariner on the vasty deep, driven by fierce winds and tossed by heavy seas, and having lost anchor, and compass, and helm, hail with joy a sail pursuing him in order to convey him safely into port?

Oh! then, how much stronger is the claim upon us when, as wrecked spirits on the tumultuous sea of life, we behold an effort made to rescue us! That effort has been made by the Lord Jesus Christ, who has provided a way of escape—the way of HOLINESS—which leads the weary spirit to the Elysium of the blest. He has also planted a beacon-light at the entrance of this way, which is noted in our chart, the Bible, in these words—

“This is the will of God, even your sanctification.”

“Be ye holy, for I, your God, am holy.”

But such is the blinding influence of sin, that men do not behold this heaven-created light, though it shines in clearness and strength. And such is the roar of the sea of life in our ears, that we do not hear, very many of us, because we do not put ourselves in an attitude to hear the “still small voice” of the Spirit of God, so frequently inviting our attention to it.

It is the object of the “Guide,” we believe, by means of the gospel trumpet, to awaken attention to this voice, and to the beacon-light indicated above, and then, while pointing continually to the “way of Holiness,” which is not only a delightful way, but the *only* one (Heb. 12: 14,) that leads from earth to heaven, it employs various means, argument, experience and exhortation, to aid us in finding this way, and to encourage us in persevering therein, even to the goal.

Furthermore, this periodical is the only one, I believe, within the limits of our wide-spread and prosperous land, which is set expressly for the defence of this grand, cardinal, Scripture doctrine. “Holiness of heart,” which should be the watch-word of every redeemed spirit on earth, is unfurled, I believe, on no other banner as the single purpose for which it exists. Other sheets have a tendency to fill my mind with the noise and strife of men and things. This, extending its wand over the troubled waters, hushes to peace, and calmly points me to the tranquil rest of the “saints in light.” I am a lost child—this takes me by the hand and puts me in the road that leads me to my Father. I am a traveller—the journey of life is rugged and painful, and full of uncertainty. I have often wandered from the right track, and have well-nigh fallen into pits and snares which have been spread for my destruction. But here is a “Guide” which will lead me by a way safe and pleasant, up to my long-sought home. No wonder, then, that I hail it as a treasure. No wonder that I feel grateful to my beloved mother for having furnished me this Guide.

Affectionately, in the bonds of Christian love,  
Grant County, Ky., Nov. 1847.

W



From the Oberlin Evangelist.

"BUT WAS IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED LIKE AS WE ARE."

"How can that be possible," said a troubled daughter of Zion, "since he had no ungodly companion to trouble him as I have; how *could* he have been tempted as I am?"

With a sensibility easily excited, this good woman was often vexed by the opposition and contradiction of a husband whose devotions were all performed at the altar of mammon. She had an enlightened and lively conscience, and the waves of her guilty passion were furiously lashing her trembling hope and threatening to overwhelm it in despair. Sighing for the victory over that terrible foe of her salvation, her ungovernable temper, and feeling that she must have it or perish forever, she exclaimed to her minister, in the fulness of a burdened heart, "Sir, what shall I do? Can I be delivered from this sin?" "You can," was his prompt reply.—"Trust in Christ and he will do the work for you effectually. He will deliver you out of the hand of this enemy that you may serve him in righteousness and holiness before him all your life." "Oh, sir," said she, "he was never tempted as I am—he cannot sympathize with me in such trials." "Surely, he can," said the minister, "He sees your circumstances and knows your difficulties—he can help you: trust him and fear not." "You cannot sympathize with me," said she, "for you have never been placed in my circumstances and could not feel as I do: and how can Christ do it, since he has never been situated as I am, with a wedded companion to oppose him in every step of his spiritual progress?"

The minister was at a loss, for a moment, how to make her see the truth of the passage quoted above, and to realize that Christ could succor her. Until this was done, hope could not enter. If Christ had been married to a Jezebel, the way would have been clear to her mind, how He could have afforded her the sympathy and succor she needed.

At length she was asked, "what are you by your peculiar circumstances tempted to do which is wrong, and which perils your salvation?" "To get angry," was the reply. "Well," said her teacher, "was not Christ tempted to get angry as well and as fiercely as you? And is it of any consequence *in what way the temptation came, so that he was tempted at this very point where you are tempted?* Can he not succor you? He knows in his own experience how you feel. He remembers how he overcame the as-

saults of hell in this direction, and can lead you into the same glorious victory, can he not?"

"All this is true," said she, as her agitation began to be succeeded by a calm. "What now," said the minister "is the philosophy of your getting angry? Is the crossing of your will the thing which draws the rasp over your sensibility?" "That is it, precisely," said she.

"Was not the Saviour abundantly tempted in this way," asked the minister? "Did not the Pharisees so tempt him when they tried to catch him in his words, when they went about to kill him, and when they charged him with casting out devils by the prince of devils; and did he not *feel* the temptation sorely, when he looked around upon them with *indignation*? Did not the devil so tempt him when he urged Christ to worship him? Are not the world of sinners doing it, when they trample his precious blood under their feet?"

"O yes, yes," said the good sister, "*he was tempted like as I am*. He had the whole world for an ungodly companion, and especially his own people, the Jews, whose husband he was. If I had been treated as my Saviour was, my temptation would be much more severe than it now is. Jesus can help me. I will trust in him?"

This disciple learned the lesson, from this time found complete succor in Christ, and went away rejoicing.

We remember a brother, too, who had a diseased body which was a source of great and severe temptation; and who, until the foregoing experience, throwing light upon the passage above cited, was given him, supposed Christ, whose body was every whit whole, and not a source of temptation as was his, could afford him no succor in the hour of such trial. He too rejoiced when he saw how Christ was tempted like as he was.

We have introduced these facts to illustrate a practical difficulty felt by many a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

If we mistake not, it is a common thing for Christians to think their temptations altogether peculiar to themselves, and especially that they are unlike anything in the experience of the Saviour. The result is that they get little succor from earth or heaven, from man or God. They sink under the rolling billows of temptation; they are tossed with the tempest and not comforted. They carry their burdens like a body of death; they judge the gospel out of their own experience, and ruinously conclude that there can be no hope for them till they leave the flesh when, as they hope, temptation will leave them. Poor souls, they have been bound, lo, these eighteen years, and sure they ought to be loosed from their infirmity. *Here is the remedy*: Let them know and assuredly be-



lieve that the Lord Jesus was tempted IN ALL POINTS LIKE AS WE ARE, and that, THAT HE MIGHT SUCCOR US AND SHIELD US FROM EVERY FORM OF TEMPTATION.

“He knows what sore temptations mean,  
For he has felt the same.”

We know of no truth more important to be laid hold of, and *held fast to* amid all the twisting and wrenchings of the devil to wrest away saving truth from the souls of believers, than the one just stated. *It is the Christian's anchor*, and without it, he will drift upon the breakers in spite of all he can do. Jesus must be understood to be the *universal succorer of his people*. He has experienced the aggregate of temptation; he knows all its *heavings*, all its *conflict*, all its *frost* and *flame* and *flood*; and more, and better than all, he knows its *VICTORY* too; and now he waits to be gracious to every tempted soul. He will go with them into the fiery furnace, and the lion's den—the flame shall not consume nor the flood overwhelm them.

But alas, the devil has blinded the minds of many of Christ's dear ones to this fact, *that Jesus was tempted just as they are*.—He has done this in order that he might cut off their supplies and starve them into obedience to his will. The poor in Zion are often distressed with a thousand forms of temptation growing out of their poverty. Their heads drop and their hearts sink under the rolling surge, as if there were no Almighty Succorer walking upon the billows to sustain them. Let them remember that Jesus was poor too, and experienced all their sorrows in their behalf.

We think there are but few Christians who realize that Christ can succor them when tempted to unbelief. They dream not that He was ever tempted to distrust his Father; and they mourn over their easily besetting sin of unbelief as though there was no hope. They exclaim often, in bitterness of spirit, “Oh, that we could get rid of our unbelief which hides the Savior from our eyes! Then would our peace be as a river and our righteousness as the waves of the sea, joy and gladness would be found in our hearts, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.”

The difficulty here is, that Christ is not practically regarded as a Saviour from unbelief. The mind does not see its Redeemer buffetting the waves of unbelief in order that he might be able to succor us in contending with the same. *The truth is, temptation always aims at the destruction of faith*. Just in proportion as Christ was tempted, then, is he qualified to succor us when we are beset with unbelief. Christian, do you read of Christ's setting his face as a flint, striving against sin unto blood and death, as in

Gethsemane and upon the cross? What means all this? The powers of hell are assaulting him and trying to secure his fall into sin; and through this event the overthrow of Jehovah's empire. But how could they produce his fall, but by destroying his confidence in his Father? and how could he stand against these combined hosts of hell, but by holding fast to his faith? Ponder, Christian, the lesson we have touching the trial of his faith in those wondrous words, "Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani," and if you are tempted to distrust the Saviour, go to him with the trial, and learn how perfectly he can deliver your soul. "He was in all points tempted like as we are."

*Aurora, Illinois.*

W. L. P.

## THE INVITATION ACCEPTED.

*"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*—JOHN vi. 37.

Just as I am—without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bid'st me come to thee—  
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot—  
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—though toss'd about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
With fears within, and wars without—  
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind,  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need, in thee to find—  
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because thy promise I believe—  
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down;  
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone—  
O Lamb of God, I come!